

Med school grad sues, says police injured his shoulder

By Henry K. Lee
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

A recent graduate of UCSF Medical School has filed a \$1 million federal civil rights suit accusing San Francisco police of roughing him up and injuring his shoulder as he was tinkering with a car near an auto repair shop.

The confrontation forced Edward Yamoah, who is now a resident intern at a Houston-area hospital, to undergo surgery on a torn rotator cuff, said the suit filed in U.S. District Court in San Francisco.

"This is a wonderful man who

is doing everything possible to be a good citizen, and yet he gets treated in the most outrageous manner possible," Yamoah's attorney, John Burris of Oakland, said Tuesday. "He was dehumanized, and his career as a surgeon was really threatened."

A city attorney's spokesman was unavailable for comment Tuesday night. The city has not yet responded in court to the suit, which names Police Chief Heather Fong and officers Kevin Healy, 36, Jason Kristal, 28, Robert Doss, 49, and Jon Kasper, 34.

Yamoah, 33, said he had a flashlight and was putting oil into the engine of a used Acura on the night of Dec. 28, 2006, near Emerald Auto near 12th Avenue and Judah Street in the city's Inner Sunset district.

The car had been towed to the shop after hours with the owner's permission, and Yamoah had hoped to use the car for spare parts to repair a second vehicle, the suit said.

As Yamoah was working on the Acura, Healy and Kasper got out of a police car and told him to "shut up" after he greeted them, the suit said. It wasn't clear why the officers chose to approach Yamoah.

Yamoah told the officers that the Acura was his car and that he lived nearby, but Kasper pushed him against the vehicle and "applied a painful amount of pressure" to his elbow, the suit said. The pushing was allegedly so severe it caused an ink-stamp in Yamoah's shirt to break.

Yamoah yelled that the officer was hurting him but got no response, the suit said. Without provocation, Kasper kicked Yamoah in the right leg and told him that he was "just doing my job" when Yamoah asked why he was kicked, the suit said.

Kristal arrived on scene and punched Yamoah in the chest with a closed fist, the suit said. Yamoah asked why he did this, and Kristal replied, "because I want to," the suit said.

Police walked Yamoah to a nearby home that he was moving out of and let him go when a roommate told them that he recognized Yamoah, the suit said.

Doss falsely stated in his police report that Yamoah was "litigious, threatening and hysterical," the suit said.


Doss wrote that Yamoah "wanted to speak with his attorney because he wanted to get paid for this incident," the suit said. Yamoah denied making such a statement.

Yamoah was not charged with a crime. The suit alleges assault, battery, false imprisonment, intentional infliction of emotional distress and negligence.

The suit also alleges that the officers were motivated by "racial prejudice" because Yamoah is African American.

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